


**Listing of claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-4. (cancelled)

Claim 5. (currently amended) A plasmid for expression of recombinant eucaryotic genes comprising:

 a first transcription unit comprising a first transcriptional control sequence transcriptionally linked with a first 5'-untranslated region comprising a first synthetic intron, a first coding sequence, and a first 3'-untranslated region/poly (A) signal, wherein said first synthetic intron is between said first transcriptional control sequence and said first coding sequence; and

a second transcription unit comprising a second transcriptional control sequence transcriptionally linked with a second 5'-untranslated region comprising a second synthetic intron, a second coding sequence, and a second 3'-untranslated region/poly (A) signal, wherein said second synthetic intron is between said second transcriptional control sequence and said second coding sequence.

~~The plasmid of claim 1,~~ wherein the first and second synthetic introns both comprise 5' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #1 through #9, and/or branch points having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #16 through #22, and/or 3' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.

Claims 6-9 (cancelled).

Claims 10. (currently amended) A plasmid for expression of recombinant eucaryotic genes, comprising an intron having variable splicing, a first coding sequence, and a second coding sequence, wherein the plasmid comprises:

a transcriptional control sequence transcriptionally linked with a first coding sequence and a second coding sequence;

a 5'-untranslated region;

an intron 5' to said first coding sequence;

an alternative 3' splice site located between the first and second coding sequence; and

a 3'-untranslated region/poly(A) signal.

The plasmid of claim 8, wherein the intron comprises a 5' splice site having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #1 through #9, and/or branch points having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #16 through #22, and/or 3' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.

Claims 11-13 (cancelled)

Claim 14. (currently amended) A plasmid for expression of recombinant eucaryotic genes comprising:

a transcriptional control sequence transcriptionally linked with a first coding sequence, an IRES sequence, a second coding sequence, and a 3'-untranslated region/poly(A) signal, wherein said IRES sequence is between said first coding sequence and said second coding sequence; and

a synthetic intron between said transcriptional control sequence and said first coding sequence.

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~~The plasmid of claim 13, wherein the synthetic intron comprises a 5' splice site having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #1 through #9, and/or branch points having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #16 through #22, and/or 3' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.~~

Claims 15-16 (cancelled)

Claims 45-49 (cancelled)

cb 50. (New) The plasmid of claim 5 wherein the first and second synthetic introns both comprise 5' splice sites having the sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #1 through #9, branch points having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #16 through #22, and 3' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.

51. (New) The plasmid of claim 10 wherein the first and second synthetic introns both comprise 5' splice sites having the sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #1 through #9, branch points having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #16 through #22, and 3' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.

52. (New) The plasmid of claim 10 wherein either the 3' splice site or the alternative 3' splice site is weakened with respect to the other.

53. (New) The plasmid of claim 10 wherein either the 3' splice site or the alternative 3' splice site is weakened with respect to the other by changing three consecutive T's to A's.

54. (New) The plasmid of claim 10 wherein the 3' splice site has a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45 with residues #32 through #34 replaced by

AAA and the alternative 3' splice site has a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.

55. (New) The plasmid of claim 14 wherein the synthetic intron comprise the 5' splice site having the sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #1 through #9, branch points having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #16 through #22, and 3' splice sites having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues #25 through #45.

56. (New) A synthetic transcription unit for efficient and accurate expression of recombinant eucaryotic genes, the transcription unit comprising a synthetic intron comprising:

a 5' splice site having a sequence MAGGTRAGT, wherein M = C or A and R = G or A;

a branch point having a sequence YNYTRAY, wherein Y = C or T, R = A or G and N = any base; and

a 3' splice site having a sequence Y<sub>16</sub>NYAGG, wherein Y = C or T, and N = any base.

57. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 56, wherein the 3' splice site has a sequence Y<sub>3</sub>TTTTTTT<sub>6</sub>NYAGG, wherein Y = C or T, and N = any base.

58. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 57, wherein the 3' splice site has a sequence TTCTTTTTTCTCTTCNYAGG, wherein Y = C or T, and N = any base.

59. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 58, wherein the branch point and 3' splice site together have a sequence YNYTRAYGGY<sub>16</sub>NYAGG, wherein Y = C or T, R = G or A, and N = any base.

60. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 59, wherein the GG between Y and Y<sub>16</sub> of sequence YNYTRAYGGY<sub>16</sub>NYAGG are substituted with from 2 up to 14 nucleotides of any base.

61. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 59, wherein the branch point and 3' splice site together have a sequence YNYTRAYGGTTCTTTTTTCTCTTCNYAGG, wherein Y = C or T, R = G or A, and N = any base.

62. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 61, wherein the branch point and 3' splice site together have a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues # 16 through #45.

63. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 56, wherein the synthetic intron has a sequence CAGGTAAGT -N<sub>x</sub>- TACTAACGGTTCTTTTTTCTCTTCACAGG, wherein x = 49-159, CAGGTAAGT is a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues # 1through #9, and TACTAACGGTTCTTTTTTCTCTTCACAGG is a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues # 16 through #45.

64. (New) The synthetic transcription unit of claim 63, wherein the synthetic intron has a sequence CAGGTAAGTGTCTTC -N<sub>77</sub>- TACTAACGGTTCTTTTTTCTCTTCACAGG, wherein CAGGTAAGT is a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues # 1through #9, and TACTAACGGTTCTTTTTTCTCTTCACAGG is a sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 residues # 16 through #45.